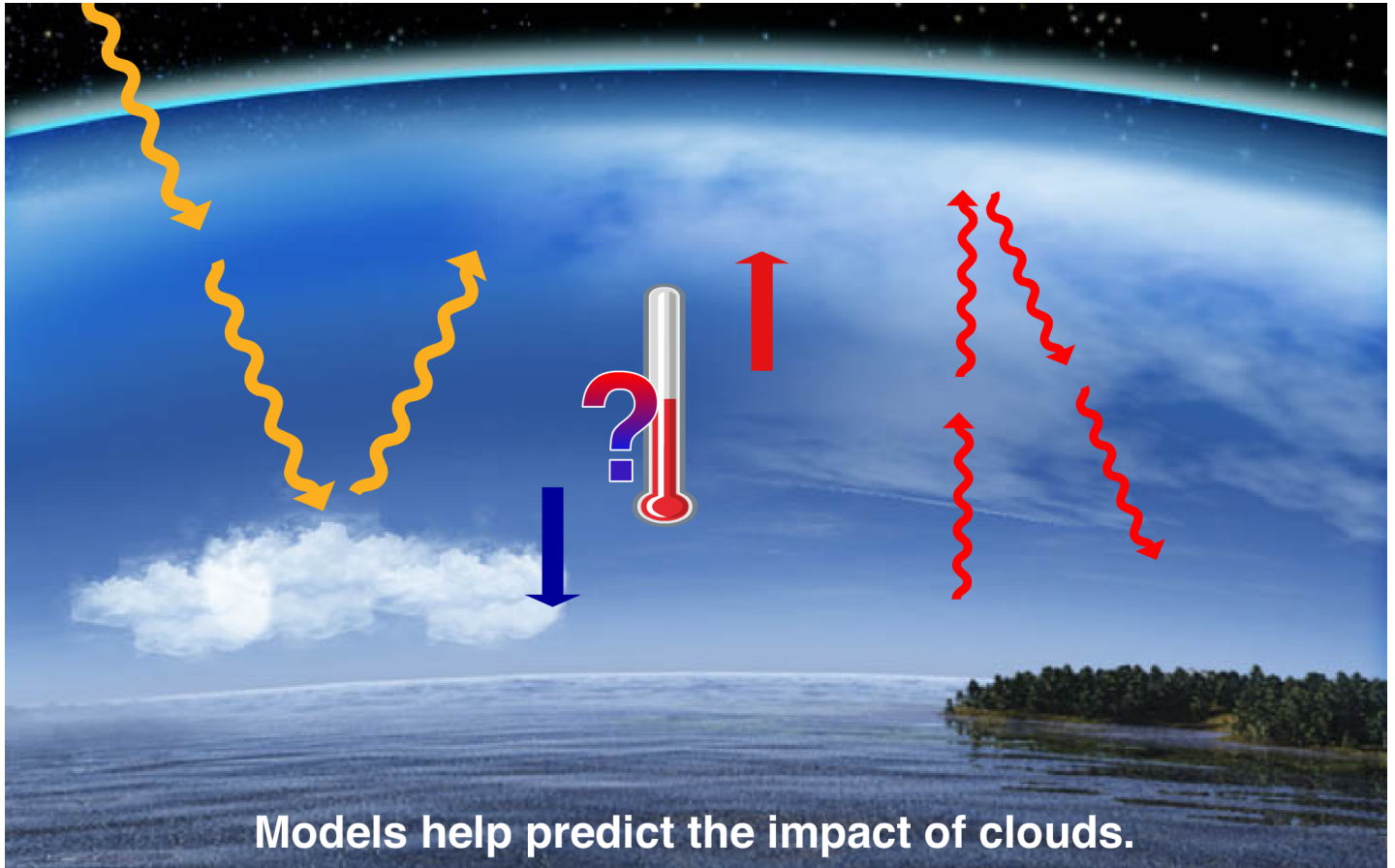


CLOUDS

THE WILD CARD OF CLIMATE CHANGE



Will clouds accelerate warming trends, or help moderate rising temperatures? As temperatures rise, more clouds form from surface evaporation. Clouds' type and height determine what influence they will have on temperature. Low dense clouds reflect the sun's rays, helping to lower temperatures, an example of negative feedback. High, thin, wispy clouds reflect heat back to Earth increasing temperatures, an example of positive feedback. Temperature and climate predictions will continue to improve with the improvement of cloud models.



Image Credit: Nicolle Rager Fuller, National Science Foundation
For more information on Clouds see: www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/clouds/